

CLAIMS

I claim:

1. A method comprising:

- (a) receiving a prescription at a pharmacy;
- 5 (b) transmitting data corresponding to the prescription electronically to a pharmacist located remotely from the pharmacy;
- (c) preparing a medical item corresponding to the prescription at the pharmacy responsive to direction received electronically from the pharmacist;
- (d) 10 delivering the medical item corresponding to the prescription to a customer.

2. The method according to claim 1 wherein step (a) comprises producing an electronic representation of the prescription through operation of a scanner.

3. The method according to claim 1 wherein step (a) includes providing at least one input through a keypad on a customer terminal.

4. The method according to claim 1 wherein step (a) comprises reading machine-readable indicia with a reading device.

5. The method according to claim 2 and further comprising subsequent to step (a) and prior to step (d), transcribing data from the prescription at the pharmacy, and wherein in step (b) both the electronic representation of the prescription and the transcribed data are transmitted to the pharmacist.

6. The method according to claim 5 and prior to step (d) comparing by the pharmacist of the electronic representation of the prescription and the transcribed data.

7. The method according to claim 1 wherein step (a) comprises receiving the prescription in a form including audio, and wherein step (b) comprises transmitting data corresponding to the audio to the pharmacist.

8. The method according to claim 7 and further comprising converting the audio to corresponding text, and prior to step (d) comparing the audio and text by the pharmacist.

9. The method according to claim 1 wherein step (c) comprises controlling at least one robot in the pharmacy by the pharmacist .

10. The method according to claim 9 wherein step (c) comprises the pharmacist controlling a drug retrieval robot and a compounding robot in the pharmacy.

5 11. The method according to claim 10 and further comprising in step (c) transporting constituent items between the drug retrieval robot and the compounding robot.

12. The method according to claim 11 wherein in step (c) the constituent items are transported through a pneumatic tube system.

10 13. The method according to claim 9 wherein step (c) comprises operating the at least one robot to select and measure a quantity of a constituent item.

14. The method according to claim 10 wherein step (c) comprises operation of the drug retrieval robot to select a plurality of constituent items, and operating the compounding robot to mix the plurality of constituent items to produce a compound item.

15. The method according to claim 14 wherein step (c) further comprises transporting at least one of the plurality of constituent items between the drug retrieval robot and the compounding robot through a pneumatic tube system.

16. The method according to claim 15 wherein step (c) further comprises transporting the compound item through the pneumatic tube system to the drug retrieval robot and storing the compound item through operation of the drug retrieval robot.

17. The method according to claim 16 wherein step (c) further comprises labeling the compound item through operation of the drug retrieval robot.

18. The method according to claim 1 wherein step (c) comprises labeling the medical item prior to step (d).

19. The method according to claim 18 and prior to step (d) further comprising viewing of the labeled medical item by the pharmacist through operation of a camera in the pharmacy.

20. The method according to claim 17 and prior to step (d) further comprising viewing of the labeled compound item through operation of a camera in the pharmacy.

21. The method according to claim 19 and prior to step (d) further comprising receiving payment from the customer for the medical item.

22. The method according to claim 21 wherein step (d) comprises delivering the medical item to the customer through a pneumatic tube system.

5 23. The method according to claim 21 and prior to step (d) further comprising checking at least one online database by the pharmacist which database contains information pertinent to at least one of the customer and the medical item.

24. The method according to claim 23 wherein the checking step includes checking at least one online database that includes data corresponding to medications prescribed for the
10 customer.

25. The method according to claim 23 wherein the checking step comprises checking at least one online database including information concerning a medical insurance plan associated with the customer.

26. The method according to claim 21 and further comprising conferring with the
15 customer by the pharmacist via an audio visual link.

27. The method according to claim 1 and further comprising conferring with the customer by the pharmacist via an audio visual link.

28. The method according to claim 21 and further comprising generating through operation of a computer a plurality of concerns related to the medical item and transmitting at least one of the concerns to the customer.

29. The method according to claim 1 and further comprising generating through operation of the computer a plurality of concerns related to the medical item and transmitting at least one of the concerns to the customer.

30. The method according to claim 1 and further comprising:

(e) receiving a further prescription at a further pharmacy;

(f) transmitting data corresponding to the further prescription electronically to the pharmacist;

(g) preparing a further medical item corresponding to the further prescription at the further pharmacy responsive to direction received electronically from the pharmacist;

- (h) delivering the further medical item corresponding to the further prescription to a further customer.